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TAGS: [PREL PHUM PINR IS VT MEPP](#)

SUBJECT: VATICAN - "VIEWS FROM THE HILL"

1. THE APRIL 13 - 20 EDITION OF NEWS AND VIEWS FROM
VATICAN CITY.

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CONTENTS:

- POPE SPEAKS OUT ON MIDDLE EAST VIOLENCE
- EASTERN FOCUS AT POPE'S EASTER MASS
- POST-EASTER REST FOR POPE CUT SHORT
- NEW VATICAN AMBASSADOR TO ITALY

NEW PAPAL APPEAL FOR PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST

2. POPE JOHN PAUL II MADE AN URGENT NEW PLEA FOR PEACE IN
THE MIDDLE EAST APRIL 18 AS HE CONCLUDED HIS REGULAR WEEKLY
AUDIENCE. THE PONTIFF SAID THAT THE VOICE OF REASON AND
CONSCIENCE MUST TAKE THE PLACE OF THE SOUND OF ARMS. HE
ADDED THAT "SINCERE ATTENTION TO THE LEGITIMATE ASPIRATIONS
OF ALL PEOPLES AND SCRUPULOUS OBSERVANCE OF INTERNATIONAL
LAW ARE THE ONLY MEANS CAPABLE OF LEADING THE SIDES BACK TO
THE NEGOTIATING TABLES AND TRACING A PATH OF FRATERNITY FOR
THOSE POPULATIONS." THE POPE REMARKED THAT WHILE THE
CHRISTIAN WORLD ENJOYS EASTER, "WE CANNOT FAIL TO FEEL
SOLIDARITY TOWARD OUR BROTHERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST WHO ARE
GOING THROUGH A MAELSTROM OF ARMED VIOLENCE AND VENGEANCE".
THE POPE'S MESSAGE WAS HEADLINED ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE
VATICAN'S SEMI-OFFICIAL DAILY, "L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO."

PAPAL EASTER MASS HAS BYZANTINE FLAVOR

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3. POPE JOHN PAUL II INCORPORATED SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS
FROM ANCIENT BYZANTINE RITES INTO HIS EASTER MASS APRIL 15,
MARKING THE CONVERGENCE OF WESTERN AND EASTERN CELEBRATIONS
OF THE CHRISTIAN FEAST. THE PONTIFF VENERATED AN ANCIENT
"ACHEROPITA" (NOT PAINTED BY HUMAN HANDS) ICON OF THE RISEN
JESUS. LATER IN THE MASS A CHOIR OF RUSSIAN SEMINARY
STUDENTS SANG THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE RESURRECTION
SET TO A RUSSIAN MELODY. (COMMENT: THE BYZANTINE TOUCHES
APPEAR TO BE PART OF A VATICAN PR EXERCISE IN PREPARATION
FOR THE POPE'S FORTHCOMING VISITS TO GREECE AND UKRAINE. THE
MAJORITY OF CHRISTIANS IN BOTH COUNTRIES USE BYZANTINE FORMS
OF WORSHIP. REUNIFICATION OF EUROPE'S CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IS
AT THE TOP OF POPE JOHN PAUL'S WISH LIST. IT IS LIKELY THAT
GESTURES, HOWEVER SMALL, SIGNALING OPENNESS TO THE EASTERN
ORTHODOX WILL CONTINUE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE VATICAN'S
PUBLIC CEREMONIES, AT LEAST DURING THE PRESENT PONTIFICATE.
END COMMENT).

POPE SKIPS POST-EASTER HOLIDAY

4. BREAKING WITH TRADITION, POPE JOHN PAUL CUT SHORT HIS
POST-EASTER BREAK AND RETURNED TO VATICAN CITY APRIL 18 FOR
HIS WEEKLY GENERAL AUDIENCE. EASTER WEEK EVENTS LEFT THE
POPE VISIBLY FATIGUED AND AT TIMES HE APPEARED ON THE VERGE
OF COLLAPSE. DESPITE THE RIGORS, VATICAN SPOKESMAN JOAQUIN
NAVARRO-VALLS ANNOUNCED THAT THE 80-YEAR OLD POPE WOULD
SPEND ONLY TWO DAYS AT HIS RETREAT 25 KILOMETERS OUTSIDE OF
ROME.

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POPE APPOINTS NEW AMBASSADOR TO ITALY

5. POPE JOHN PAUL HAS APPOINTED ARCHBISHOP PAOLO ROMEO AS
HIS AMBASSADOR (NUNCIO) TO ITALY AND THE REPUBLIC OF SAN
MARINO. ROMEO IS CURRENTLY PAPAL REPRESENTATIVE IN CANADA. A

34-YEAR VETERAN OF THE VATICAN DIPLOMATIC SERVICE, ARCHBISHOP ROMEO HAS SERVED AS NUNCIO TO COLOMBIA AND HAITI. HIS OTHER POSTINGS IN LESSER CAPACITIES HAVE INCLUDED THE PHILIPPINES, BELGIUM, VENEZUELA AND RWANDA. HE ALSO WORKED IN THE VATICAN'S FOREIGN MINISTRY. BORN IN 1938 IN SICILY, ROMEO WAS ORDAINED A PRIEST IN 1961. HE HOLDS A DOCTORATE IN CANON LAW AND ENTERED THE VATICAN'S DIPLOMATIC SERVICE IN 1967. HE SPEAKS FRENCH, SPANISH, ENGLISH AND GERMAN, AS WELL AS HIS NATIVE ITALIAN. MERANTE

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